

REMARKS

Claims 13 and 17 have been canceled without prejudice in response to the Restriction Requirement. Claim 1-12 and 14-16 are currently pending. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced in this amendment.

Restriction Requirement

In the Office Action, the Examiner stated that the application contains inventions “which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1,” and requested that one of the following groups be elected:

Group I, claims 1-12 and 14-16, drawn to an oligoribonucleotide or peptide nucleic acid, which binds to the RNA of hepatitis C virus (HCV), and vectors and therapeutic agents thereof; or

Group II, claims 13 and 17, drawn to a method of inhibiting HCV replication ability using the oligoribonucleotide or peptide nucleic acid of claims 1 and 9.

In response, Applicants hereby elect, without traverse, Group I, claims 1-12 and 14-16, drawn to an oligoribonucleotide or peptide nucleic acid, which binds to the RNA of hepatitis C virus (HCV), and vectors and therapeutic agents thereof.

Election Requirement

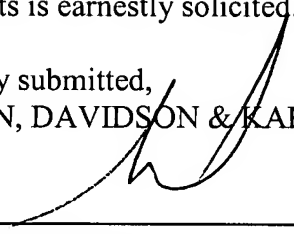
In the Office Action, the Examiner requested that Applicants elect a single sequence for prosecution on the merits.

In response, Applicants hereby elect, without traverse, the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID No. 23 for prosecution on the merits.

Conclusion

An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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